THE U.S. NAVY

IN

VIETNAM

COMMANDER U. S. NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM
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IV CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

FACTS AND FIGURES ON THE MEKONG DELTA

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CHAPTER I -- IV CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

The IV Corps Tactical Zone (IV CTZ) is the Government of Vietnam subdivision for its 16 southernmost provinces. It is located in the delta of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. The terms IV CTZ and Delta are used interchangeably to refer to this area.

IV CTZ is divided into four operational areas, three Division Tactical Areas and one special zone. They are:

44th Special Zone: Created Jan. 1, 1968, the 44th Special Zone comprises the Provinces of Chau Doc, Kien Phong and Kien Tuong. Zone headquarters is in Cao Lanh, Kien Phong. Primary mission of the zone is to patrol the Cambodian border and to interdict infiltration. This mission is performed by GVN special forces and Civilian Irregular Defense Groups.

Upper Delta Division Tactical Area: This area is the responsibility of the 7th ARVN Division which is headquartered in My Tho, Dinh Tuong Province. In addition to Dinh Tuong this DTA includes Kien Hoa and Go Cong Provinces. Dinh Tuong has always been a hotbed of Viet Cong activity because of the large stretch of National Highway 4 which passes through the province.

41st Division Tactical Area: This area is the responsibility of the 9th ARVN Division which has its headquarters in Sa Dec, Sa Dec Province. In addition to Sa Dec, the area includes three other provinces, An Giang, Vinh Long and Vinh Binh.

42nd Division Tactical Area: This is the responsibility of the 21st ARVN Division. It is an important DTA since it comprises six provinces including IV CTZ headquarters in Can Tho. In addition to Bac Lieu, Bac Lieu Province, where its headquarters are located, the DTA includes five other provinces, Phong Dinh, Kien Giang, Chuong Thien, Ba Xuyen and An Xuyen.

CHAPTER II -- THE MEKONG DELTA

Area.....14,250 square miles

Population.....5,818,363

Political Divisions

Provinces.....16

Districts.....92

Villages.....775

Hamlets.....5,274

Ethnic Groups

Vietnamese.....89 per cent

Cambodian..... 8 per cent

Chinese..... 2 per cent

Others..... 1 per cent

Religious Groups

Buddhist.....53 per cent

Confucian.....25 per cent

Cao Dai..... 6 per cent

Catholic..... 6 per cent

Others.....10 per cent

GEOGRAPHY: Rivers, canals, mangrove swamps and rice paddies describe the Mekong Delta's geography. Elevation ranges from zero to six feet, the latter at the Cambodian border. There are several hills in Chau Doc Province, the highest of which is 710 meters (2,300 feet).

CLIMATE: Typically tropical, consisting of a dry period from January to March during which almost no rain falls and the sun bakes the ground brick-hard. Increasing rains occur during April, May and June. The monsoon rains reach their height in July, August and September. The rains decrease during the last quarter of the year, October through December.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION: Each of the 16 provinces is headed by a province chief appointed by the central government. The province chief wears two hats also being the sector commander on the military side. Province and sector are synonymous, the former referring to the civic organization and the latter, to the military division of the IV CTZ. The same is true at the district level where the military aspect is known as a sub-sector. A district chief heads both the municipal and military organizations at that level.

ECONOMY: The economy is based on the cultivation of rice, although coconuts, bananas, mangoes and breadfruit are grown in quantity. Fishing is second only to rice as an industry with the sea, rivers, canals and fish ponds yielding a plentiful supply of fish. Livestock raised include hogs and cattle, of which hogs are the most important. Chickens and ducks are also plentiful.

TRANSPORTATION: Three major traffic arteries cross the Delta — National Route 4 and the Mekong and Bassac Rivers. A secondary waterway is the Mang Thit-Nicolai canal in Vinh Long Province which shortens travel time from lower Delta areas to Saigon almost in half. The canal was Viet Cong controlled until the fall of 1967 when ARVN efforts opened it to civilian traffic.

NATIONAL ROUTE 4: The only highway linking areas of the Delta with Saigon is QL 4. It stretches from the IV CTZ boundary just south of Tan An in Dinh Tuong Province, through that province and four others to Ca Mau (Quan Long) in An Xuyen Province. That part of Route 4 in the IV CTZ is 277 kilometers (173 miles) long. It winds its way through Dinh Tuong, Vinh Long, Phong Dinh, Bac Lieu, Ba Xuyen and An Xuyen Provinces linking such important Delta cities as My Tho, Vinh Long, Can Tho, Soc Trang, Bac Lieu and Ca Mau. It has always been and continues to be a favorite VC target particularly in Dinh Tuong Province and in areas south of Can Tho all the way to Ca Mau. Nightly mining and mortaring incidents are not uncommon, however, ARVN engineers have the road open quickly the next morning.

CHAPTER III — FRIENDLY MILITARY

GVN FORCES

ARVN	40,000
REGIONAL FORCES	50,000
POPULAR FORCES	60,000
NATIONAL POLICE	13,000
CIDG	6,000
TOTAL	169,000 (Approximate)

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ARVN BREAKDOWN

7th Division	10,000
9th Division	10,000
21st Division	10,000

There are two (2) artillery battalions (105mm) in each division.

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CORPS UNITS

(Under operational control of divisions)

4th Ranger Group -- 32d, 41st, 42nd, 43d and 44th Battalions. These are mobile forces capable of being moved from one division to another depending on the tactical situation.

Corps Artillery -- One battalion of 155-mm howitzers deployed by platoons as required by the tactical situation.

MISCELLANEOUS

Vietnamese Navy -- Supports IV CTZ with eight (8) River Assault Groups, each consisting of 19 landing craft of various types.

74th Fighter Wing -- Vietnamese Air Force based at Binh Thuy Air Base near Can Tho and provides air support in offensive operations. VNAF flies the A-1 Sky Raider.

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U.S. FORCES

IV CORPS ADVISORY GROUP

There are approximately 1,600 MACV advisors in the IV CTZ. Advisory teams are located at the corps, division, regimental and battalion levels. Advisory teams are also located at the sector (province) and sub-sector (district) levels.

A new concept initiated late in 1967 is that of the Mobile Advisory Teams (MATS) whose prime mission is to advise RF/PF units. Selected combat veterans from American units are assigned to MATS.

Advisory Team 96 -- The largest of the teams in the IV CTZ includes Corps headquarters personnel and those assigned in such areas as RF/PF, communications, engineers, Ranger Group headquarters, recruiting and induction, and finance. Can Tho is home of Advisory Team 96.

OTHER U.S. FORCES

2d Brigade, 9th Infantry Division -- Only manuever U.S. fighting force in the Delta. Headquarters is in Dong Tam, Dinh Tuong Province.

164th Aviation Group -- Headquarters is in Can Tho at Can Tho Airfield. It has two assault helicopter companies and one aerial surveillance company each in Vinh Long and Soc Trang. There is an armed helicopter company, aerial surveillance company and Chinook company in Can Tho. Surveillance companies fly Mohawk and O-1 aircraft providing day and night reconnaissance.

Special Forces -- Primary mission is to advise Vietnamese Special Forces and CIDG units in the 44th Special Zone. A "C" Detachment in Can Tho directs operations. "B" Detachments are located in Chau Doc, Muc Hoa, Cao Lanh and Phuc Quoc Island. The detachments also provide advisors at the district level.

U.S. Navy Task Force 116 -- Headquarters is at Binh Thuy on the Bassac River. Force conducts operation Game Warden in its 31-foot River Patrol Boats (PBR's). Force also serves to escort cargo and personnel.

U.S. Air Force -- Air Force personnel serve as advisors to RVNAF. It also has a flight of AC-47 Aircraft (known as Spooky) stationed at Binh Thuy. Some Air Force personnel serve as forward air controllers.

CHAPTER IV — THE ENEMY

VIET CONG STRENGTH

Main force, provincial units, guerrillas...	40,000
Infrastructure, self defense, etc.....	40,000
Total.....	80,000 (Est.)

* * * * * * * * * * *

Base Areas — U Minh Forest along the southwestern coast of the country, and in the mangrove swamp areas along the eastern coast in An Xuyen, Vinh Binh and Kien Hoa Provinces.

Provinces — The Viet Cong divide the Mekong Delta into 11 provinces as opposed to the GVN's 16 Provinces.

Tactical Zones — The Viet Cong divide the Delta into two tactical areas, Military Region II and III. Military Region II includes the VC provinces of An Giang, Cao Lanh, Moc Hoa, My Tho and Ben Tre and actually extends out of the IV CTZ into the GVN III CTZ. Military Region III includes the VC provinces of Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Can Tho, Rach Gia, Soc Trang and Ca Mau.

North Vietnamese Troops — There is no evidence of North Vietnamese units in the IV CTZ. Late in 1967 three North Vietnamese soldiers were captured, however, they were re-groupees who had gone north from the Delta for training and then returned.

CHAPTER V — THE TET OFFENSIVE

DATES — From 1800 hours 29 Jan 68 to 2400 hours 14 Feb 68

MILITARY CASUALTIES

Viet Cong

By ARVN:	4,654 KIA	546 VC Captured	408 VC Suspects
By U.S. 9th:	598 KIA	18 VC Captured	None
Total	5,252 KIA	564 VC Captured	408 VC Suspects

American

IVCTZ Personnel:	37 KIA	243 WIA	4 MIA
9th U.S. Personnel:	48 KIA	200 WIA	3 MIA
Total	85 KIA	443 WIA	7 MIA

Free World Forces

Two Republic of Korea (ROK) advisors were KIA.

ARVN

All ARVN casualty figures must be obtained in Saigon.

THE OFFENSIVE

The Tet Offensive was kicked off in the IV CTZ at approximately 0230 hours the morning of January 31. Within 48 hours the VC had attacked all 11 of the VC designated province capitals and 13 of the 16 GVN province capitals (the only exceptions were Long Xuyen, Go Cong and Vi Thanh). Some district towns and observation posts were also attacked. However, the main objectives were province capitals and U.S. and ARVN installations.

Heavy fighting raged in many locations including My Tho, Ben Tre, Vinh Long, Cao Lanh, Can Tho and Rach Gia, but by February 6 all VC were pushed from their objectives. (Continued next page)

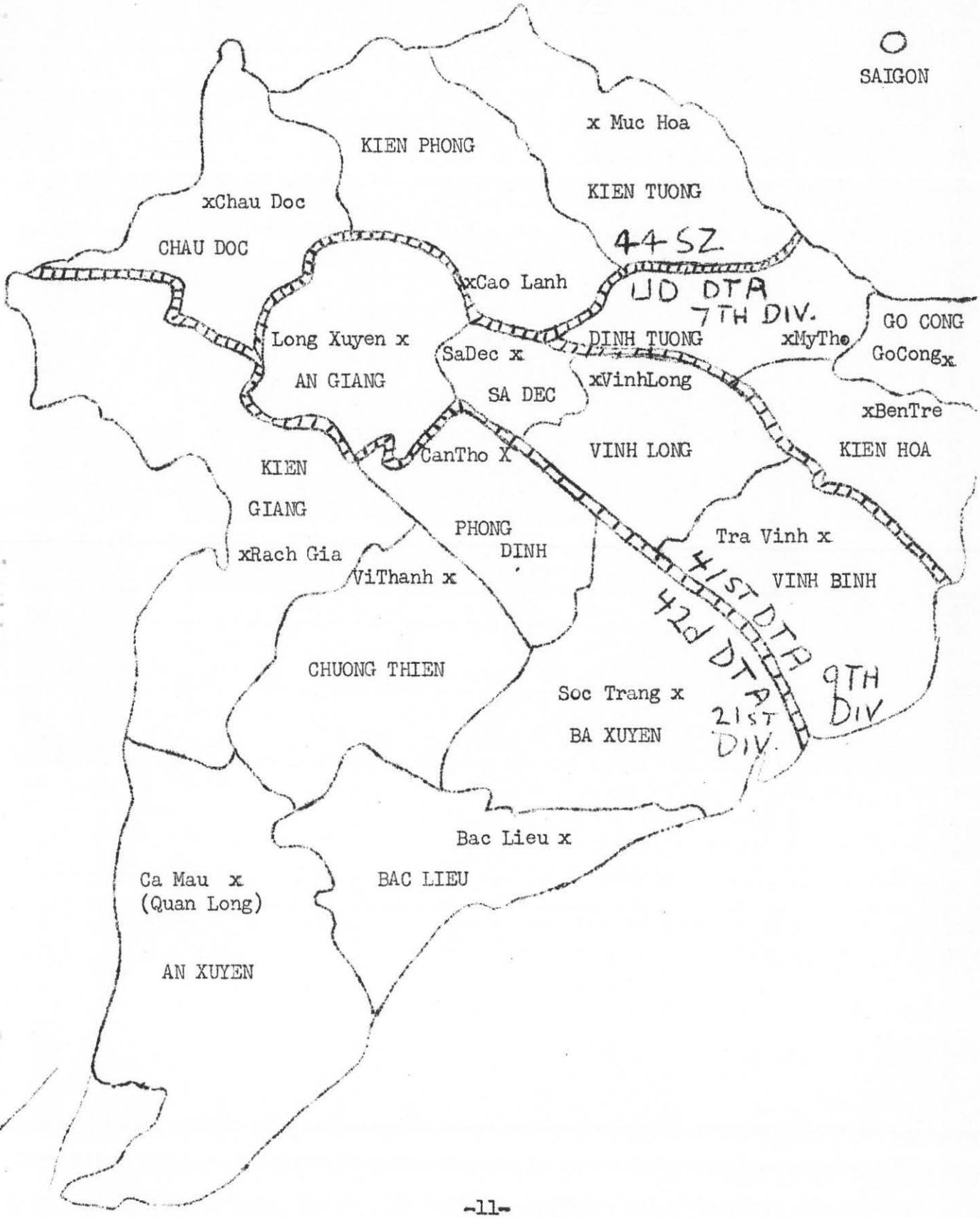
CIVILIAN CASUALTIES AND DAMAGE

PROVINCE	KILLED	WOUNDED	REFUGEES	SHELTERS	HOUSES 100% DESTROYED	HOUSES 50% DAMAGED
Dinh Tuong	193	965	35,000	5	4,939	100
Kien Hoa	234	567	23,921	7	4,148	434
Go Cong	17	61	2,000	0	28	9
Vinh Long	144	1,000	20,000	10	2,197	2,348
Vinh Binh	34	120	738	1	199	83
An Giang	1	5	11,284	0	91	51
Sa Dec	23	28	1,100	0	90	230
Phong Dinh	118	145	15,000	14	1,706	400
Kien Giang	82	153	2,129	2	108	256
Chuong Thien	29	52	500	3	59	20
Ba Xuyen	82	173	4,000	5	707	9
Bac Lieu	22	83	5,600	2	938	52
An Xuyen	24	80	104	0	0	0
Chau Doc	67	162	7,195	4	1,038	205
Kien Phong	26	130	5,638	2	479	0
Kien Thuong	52	56	1,200	3	106	37
Totals	1,138	3,580	135,409	58	16,833	4,238

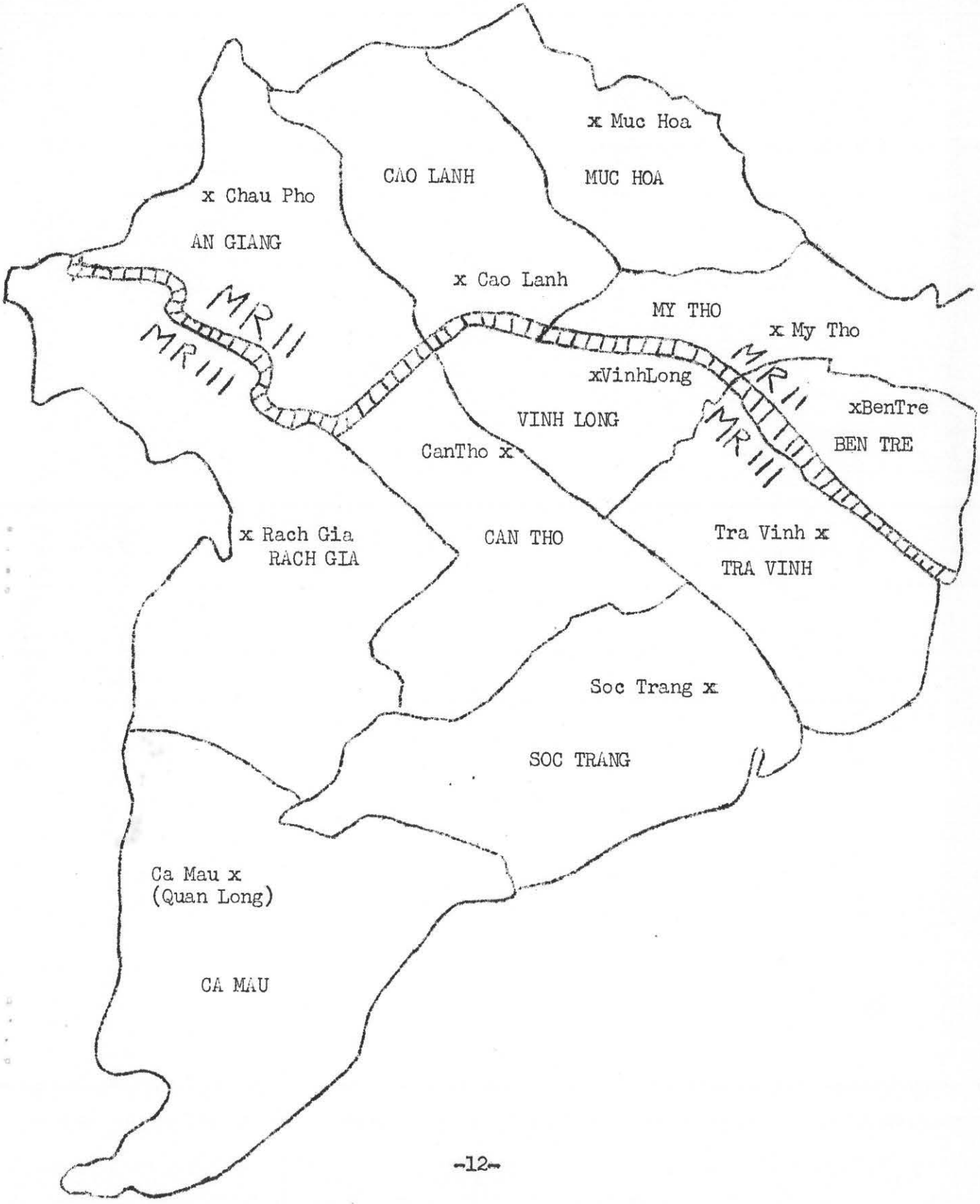
THE OFFENSIVE

GVN units then went on the offensive to push the enemy from areas surrounding the major cities. Some mortar and rocket attacks continued and there were a few half-hearted ground attacks throughout the CTZ but for the most part by February 14 the offensive was over and the VC badly beaten although there were friendly casualties and heavy damage in some locations such as My Tho, Ben Tre and Vinh Long.

THE IV CTZ -- PROVINCES AND DTA'S



VIET CONG PROVINCES, MILITARY REGIONS



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NAVY NEWS RELEASE
117 PHAN DINH PHUNG, SAIGON
PHONE : TIGER 3341

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release No. 108-68
July 9, 1968

Riv Soc 551

NAVY MOBILE BASE ARRIVES IN VIETNAM

by Lt. T.S. Storck, USN

SAIGON -- Every war the United States has fought has forced it to invent new weapons and alter old ones to defeat the enemy.

The war here in Vietnam is no exception as hundreds of new weapons and other equipment are constructed to fight a war unlike any fought before.

One of these innovations--the latest major addition to the Navy's fighting force--is PBR Mobile Base II, now anchored at Nha Be, eight miles southeast of Saigon.

It serves as a floating base for the Navy's river patrol boats (PBRs), 31-foot fiberglass craft propelled by water jets, themselves an adaptation for the Vietnam war, and the Navy's UH-1B helicopters.

The PBRs were first added to the Vietnam naval forces in 1966 to keep the Mekong Delta waterways open to civilian traffic, while closing them to the enemy. Then, in 1967, as the Viet Cong hit the PBRs harder and harder, helicopters were added to provide overhead coverage.

This worked well, except many times the Navy couldn't build a land base where the boats and choppers had to operate. As a partial remedy, four Navy tank landing ships (LST) were converted to mobile stations for the two forces.

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The LST served well in most areas, but even with this ship's shallow draft, there were a few places it still couldn't go.

Badly needed was a mobile base with a very shallow draft, yet large enough to completely supply the forces. The success of the first prototype mobile base now near Hue in I Corps led to the design from which Mobile Base II was built.

PBR Mobile Base II arrived in Vietnam in two dock landing ships (LSD) and 17 days later the PBRs were operating off it to patrol the Dong Nai River east of here to keep the Viet Cong from moving into Saigon. A short time later the helicopters were also flying off it.

PBR Mobile Base II is actually composed of six units, four 110 feet by 30 feet and two 90 feet by 28 feet. The four large units have a one deck superstructure, while the two smaller units do not. These smaller units serve as underwater storage areas and as a pier and work area.

The base was designed in six units to allow for easier moving, according to its officer-in-charge, Lieutenant C.D. Christal of Dallas, Texas, and when the units are in the desired location, they are tied together. The units have no propulsion of their own.

They were constructed using the same structural design as the Ammi pontoon, said Lt. Christal, who worked for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command during construction of the base at Wilmington, Calif., and made many of the decisions on how the base was to be constructed.

One of the sections contains the offices, the armory, chiefs' and officers' berthing, communications center and sick bay. Below the waterline, the hull contains ammunition, fuel and water.

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Another unit contains the galley "where the finest food in the Navy is prepared," said Lt. Paul D. Coyle, executive officer of the base, as he looked at the food being prepared for dinner. This unit also contains berthing for 21 transients, in addition to the underwater hull storage common to all.

Another unit is the main enlisted berthing area where all the mattresses are made of foam rubber, four inches thick. On the "roof" of this unit is the helipad with space for two helos.

In the final main section there is the repair unit with an overhead 10 ton bridge-trolly crane to lift PBRs out of the water. In this area, Lt. Christal said, "We can do all the repair work needed on a PBR from a complete engine overhaul to hull work."

The two smaller units that have no superstructure and serve as floating piers hold most of the fuel and water. Lt. Coyle said all fuel, the diesel for the PBRs and the JP5 for the choppers, is filtered and purified because dirty fuel has been a real problem in Vietnam.

The base also contains its own desalinization unit which uses the reverse osmosis method. Lt. Coyle said this means, no heat nor steam is required and it can make 5,000 gallons of potable water a day out of salt water or 15,000 out of brackish water.

The laundry has a water reclaimer which means a great savings in water as the sailors need clean clothes daily due to the hot and humid climate.

"It's the finest living in the Delta," Lt. Coyle said, with everything fully air conditioned. Unique is the central air conditioner with individual thermostats in each compartment.

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Although PBR Mobile Base II is not a ship, most of its furnishings are similar to the new ships, and men aboard it feel as though they are aboard a ship.

As with the entire Navy, the mobile base's most important asset is its mobility. As Lt. Coyle concluded, "This base gives us the capability to move 10 PBRs and a light helicopter fire team (two helicopters) into a 'hot' area and go right to work."

If the water is at least four foot deep, PBR Mobile Base II can be moved there to provide the services the PBRs, choppers and their supporting forces need to defeat the enemy. It can operate for a minimum of 30 days without being resupplied.

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NAVY NEWS RELEASE
117 PHAN DINH PHUNG, SAIGON
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE NUMBER 7-F-68

JUNE 19, 1968

PBRs THWART VIET CONG ON DELTA WATERWAYS

By Lt. T.S. Storck

They are only 31 feet long and made of fiberglass, but they have the Viet Cong on the run.

Throughout the Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone, the Viet Cong aren't moving men and supplies by water because the U.S. Navy river patrol boats--the PBRs--are there.

Day and night the crews of these green boats stop sampans and junks to check cargo manifests and personal indentification cards and to probe among the many unbelievable items that move by water--the main means of transportation in this wartorn part of the world.

But they don't stop at this. They also serve as ambulances for Americans and Vietnamese hurt in battle and for Vietnamese civilians who need more medical care than is available in the village.

The PBRs also are used to land SEALS and Vietnamese troops, provide gunfire support and help keep the Long Tau River open to commercial shipping and other rivers open to Vietnamese traffic.

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The boats are equipped with twin .50 caliber guns forward, a single .50 caliber aft, an M-60 and a Mark-18 grenade launcher. Also aboard are two M-70 40mm grenade launchers, three M-16s and a shotgun.

Most of the people on the river, though, know that the PBRs are there mainly to search their boats, so they come to the PBR before the crew sounds the horn. Sometimes, though, the men must wave at the boats or chase them.

Usually as the sampan nears the PBR, the people have the ID cards ready. At other times the sailors ask for the ID cards in Vietnamese--CAN CUOC--and speak a few other Vietnamese words to them.

While one sailor is checking ID cards, another is aboard the larger boats searching the cargo for hidden arms and ammunition.

Sometimes this means probing through a boat full of fish.

These patrols can be boring, but they need not be. The men have come to know many of the people aboard the boats they search week after week, and often they barter for foodstuffs aboard the boats.

It may only be a couple of cans of Combat Rations for a watermelon or 20 piasters for some bread or fruit, but it is a welcome relief from "C-rats."

What C-rats the men have not eaten or bartered away are usually given to the people they search. Children are especially eager to get them. If they PBRs are searching near a village, the children will often paddle their small sampan to the PBR and ask for "chop chop."

In the daytime the patrols always operate in pairs so if the Viet Cong should throw a grenade in one of the boats or fire at it, the other can immediately retaliate.

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Usually, though, the first comes from the beach and is silenced in minutes by the two boats. But in some cases the enemy hits so hard the boats can only get out of the area and ask the Navy's UH-1B helicopters to saturate the area with rockets and other fire.

There are about 180 PBRs operating from five land bases in the Mekong Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone.

The boats can operate in 8 to 12 inches of water, because they are driven by water jets, and thus can go up nearly any river and canal in the Delta.

Each boat carries a crew of four enlisted men. The lead boat also carries an enlisted patrol officer.

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OPERATION GAME WARDEN

THE RIVER PATROL FORCE (TASK FORCE 116)

Operation Game Warden is charged with preventing Viet Cong movement on the rivers of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone swamp area surrounding the shipping channel to Saigon.

The mainstay of Game Warden forces are the river patrol boats (PBRs). These 31-foot craft are designed for quiet, high-speed operation in shallow water. Three .50-caliber machine guns and numerous other individual weapons make up the boat's armament.

The PBRs work from bases in the Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone, and from specially equipped tank landing ship (LSTs) of the U.S. Pacific Fleet Amphibious Force.

Also based on board the ships and bases, working directly with the PBRs, are Navy UH-1B "Huey" armed helicopters, flown by "Seawolves," which provide rapid fire support for the PBRs. The Seawolves also support the PBRs with reconnaissance and surveillance flights.

The Game Warden PBRs work in conjunction with the units of the Vietnamese Navy River Assault Group (RAGs), as well as with the river units of the Vietnamese National Police Customs Service.

The first river patrol boats arrived March 21, 1966, and became operational April 10.

In addition to the PBRs, Operation Game Warden forces include U. S. Navy Minesweeping Boats (MSBs), charged with keeping the Long Tau River, the main shipping channel to Saigon harbor area, free of Viet Cong mines.

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(April 1968)

RIVER ASSAULT FLOTILLA ONE

River Assault Flotilla One was commissioned to provide support to U.S. combat troops in a riverine environment. Currently, River Assault Flotilla One, operating as Naval Task Force 117, is charged with supporting the Army's 2nd Brigade of the 9th Infantry Division. This Army-Navy team is known as the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF).

The Mobile Riverine Force is unique in its concept of operation. In the first U.S. operation of its kind since the Civil War, the force conducts amphibious operations in the Mekong Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone.

The Assault Flotilla is composed of Assault Squadron Nine, Assault Squadron Eleven and Support Squadron Seven. Assigned to the squadrons are a variety of ships and craft, most of which have been specifically built or converted to meet the needs of this command.

One River Assault Squadron (RAS) is capable of lifting an entire infantry battalion and elements of an artillery battery into combat and providing blocking an gunfire support for the Army troops after they are disembarked.

Troops are transported by the Armored Troop Carrier (ATC). Heavy gunfire support comes from the Monitor. Control is provided by the Command and Communication Boat (CCB) that serves both the Army and Navy as an afloat forward Command Post.

River Assault Flotilla One is under the operational command of Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam and under the administrative command of Commander U.S. Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet.

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(April 1968)

ASSAULT SUPPORT PATROL BOAT (ASPB)

CHARACTERISTICS		ARMAMENT	
Length overall	50' 1½"	20mm Cannon	1
Beam	13' 8½"	81mm Mortar	1
Engines (Diesel)	2	.7.62 or .50-caliber Machinegun	1-twin Mount
Crew	5	MK-18 Grenade Launcher	2
Speed	15 knots		

Known as the "destroyer" of the small craft fleet, the ASPB has as its initial task the job of escort and protector of the slower ATC during the troop transport phase. It provides primary mine countermeasures for the River Assault Squadrons.

The ASPB is also used for blocking and interception in the waterways around the area of operations and for afloat base security, patrol, and escort.

A boat captain, radio operator, engineman and two nonrated men make up the crew of an ASPB. Each crewmember is cross-trained to do any job on the boat.

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ARMORED TROOP CARRIER - (ATC)

CHARACTERISTICS		ARMAMENT	
Length overall	56'	20mm Cannon	1
Beam	17' 6"	.50 caliber Machine gun	2
Draft	3' 4"	.30 caliber Machine gun	4
Engines (Diesel)	2	M-18 Grenade launcher	2
Crew	7	M-79 Grenade launcher	2
Speed (Full load)	8 Knots	Small arms	Various
		Side arms	Various

The ATC's primary mission is transporting troops into combat areas. It has a secondary mission of transporting one 2½ ton prime mover, and one 105mm Howitzer, or one M-113 APC (Armored Personnel Carrier).

To execute its prime mission with maximum effectiveness and minimum risk, the basic boat, an LCM-6, has been considerably modified.

Communications gear in each boat includes one field radio, and two short range control radios with air control type headsets.

A crew of seven; boat captain, coxswain, engineer, radioman, two seaman, and one fireman man the ATC.

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(Revised 1 Oct 67)

USS ASKARI (ARL-30)

LANDING CRAFT REPAIR SHIP

CHARACTERISTICS		ARMAMENT	
Length overall	328 feet	40mm quad mounts	2
Beam	50 feet		
Draft	14		
Speed	10.6 knots		
Engines (Diesel)	2		
Complement	15 officers 232 enlisted		

USS Askari was built by the Chicago Bridge and Iron Works in Seneca, Illinois in 1944 and was commissioned on 15 March 1945 as LST-1131. Soon afterward she was decommissioned and fitted out as a landing craft repair ship by the Merrill Stevens Dry Dock and Repair Company in Jacksonville, Florida and then recommissioned on 23 July 1945 as USS Askari (ARL-30).

During the Askari's long and action-packed history many memorable events stand out in her record. Such as participating in the initial amphibious assault landing at Inchon, Korea on 15 September 1950; providing hot rice for more than 8,000 Korean refugees while at the same time clearing the propellers of the tank landing ship; she refuelled and repaired Army and Navy landing craft evacuating Hungnam while living up to her men's record of "repairing anything"; at Yokosuka, Japan in 1953 the Ashari was believed to have set a record in repairing ships when as many as 46 LSS(L)s were alongside at one time for inspection and material survey. One of her greatest moments came when she participated in the Vietnamese "Passage to Freedom" operation in 1954. Dr. Thomas A. Dooley in his book "Deliver Us From Evil; The Story of Vietnam's Flight to Freedom",

-more-

mentions the eagerness of the men of Askari to help the Vietnamese and the generous contributions of clothing they made to the refugees. She also supported the amphibious phase for evacuation of the Tachen Islands by Chinese Nationalists.

On 21 March 1956 Askari was again decommissioned and remained in the reserve fleet until the Fall of 1966 when she was recommissioned to provide for the repair of the various boats assigned to Tiver Assault Flotilla One.

Askari bears the name of a character in Asiatic mythology. In the Mohammedan mythology of Persia, Askari personifies "the soldier".

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Revised 1 October 1967

COMMAND AND COMMUNICATION BOAT - (CCB)

CHARACTERISTICS		ARMAMENT	
Length overall	60' 6"	40mm Cannon	1
Beam	17' 6"	20mm Cannon	1
Draft	3' 5"	.50 caliber Machine gun	3
Engines (Diesel)	2	.30 caliber Machine gun	2
Crew	11	M-18 Grenade launcher	2
Speed	8 Knots	M-79 Grenade launcher	3
	Small arms		Various
	Side arms		Various

The Command and Communications Boat is a floating Command post, whose primary mission is to provide command and communications facilities for the ground force commander and for the Boat Group Commander.

The CCB also has sufficient armament to provide fire support when necessary.

To execute its primary mission the CCB carries a pack type field radio and nine permanently mounted short range radios. In addition to being able to control all of the assault boats, the CCB can call in air support when needed.

A crew of eleven mans the CCB.

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Self Propelled Barracks Ship (APB)

The USS Benewah and the USS Colleton, both APB's (self- propelled auxillary barracks ships) have the distinction of being the only ones of their kind on active duty in the Navy.

These ships house over 1,100 sailors, soldiers and officers and serve as the center of operations in support of riverine assault operations.

In addition to their berthing, messing and office spaces, these floating bases have a storage capacity for a 30 day supply of fresh, frozen and dehydrated food, and maintain evaporators that produce up to 40,000 gallons of fresh water a day. They also provide a sixteen bed sick bay complete with treatment and X-ray rooms, dental office, bacteriological laboratory, pharmacy, a two table operating room with a sterilizer and autoclave, a laundry, library, a cobbler and tailor shop, and air-conditioning. Both ships have a draft of 10 feet, 10 inches and a top speed of 12 knots.

An APB is armed with two 3" .50 caliber guns, two 40mm quad-mounted antiaircraft batteries, eight .50 caliber Browning machine guns, ten .30 caliber machine guns and various small arms.

-more-

(Revised 1 Oct 67)

The USS Benewah (APB-35) was launched at the Boston Naval Shipyard on May 6, 1945 and first commissioned on March 19, 1946. Since that time the Benewah has been commissioned and decommissioned several times. In July 1966, the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard began work for the activation, modernization and major conversion of the USS Benewah to an Army brigade command ship and flagship for Commander River Assault Flotilla One. Benewah was recommissioned in January of 1967 and assigned to Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet for service with the Flotilla. Benewah is named for a county in Idaho.

The USS Colleton (APB-36) was built by the Boston Shipyard, Boston, Massachusetts. The keel was laid on June 9, 1945 and the ship was launched on July 30, 1945. The Colleton was completed in September 1946 but was never placed in commission until her assignment with River Assault Flotilla One. Colleton is named for a county in South Carolina.

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APL-26

APL-26 is a barracks barge that accommodates over 800 men of the Mobile River Force. APL's, Auxilary Personnel Lighter, have normally been used in the Navy as temperary homes for ships in overhaul or bases under construction. APL-26 is the only craft of its kind currently in use in a combatant task force. Technically APL-26 is not a commissioned vessel. She is carried in a special catagory as "in service."

Like the APB's, the APL-26's primary mission is to berth and to feed one infantry battalion and one river assault division. Unlike the APB's, APL-26 has no means of propulsion. She does, however, have two boilers for hot water and steam, two evaporators which can produce 24,000 gallons of potable water per day, 13 air conditioners and two generators. Her facilities also include a minor surgery ward and sick bay for 10 patients and a four bed isolation ward.

Built in 1944, APL-26 has remained in Bremertin, Washington where she was overhauled in 1966 for Vietnam service.

Towed from the United States, APL-26 arrived in Vietnam April 26 to begin her war-zone service with the Mobile Riverine Force (Task Force 117.)

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(Revised 1 Oct 67)

SUPPORT LST (1156) CLASS

The support LST remains at the Mobile Riverine Base to provide Army and Navy operating elements with bulk supplies. Using her bow ramps and an alonside pontoon, she breaks down pallet-size loads to fit any need. In addition to the logistic role, the 7th Fleet LST 1156 class provides berthing for one River Assault Division and various Army detachment units. She receives her supplies weekly from the resupply LST listed below.

Length overall	384 feet	Fuel capacity	274,436 gals.
Beam	55.5 feet	Fuel load cargo	1,580-tons
Draft	16.2 feet	Tank deck, sq. ft.	8,400
Engine, diesel	2	Helo landing pad	1
Complement	10 off. 147 enl.	Speed	9 knots

RESUPPLY LST (542) CLASS

The resupply LST makes weekly runs from a major resupply point to the Mobile Riverine Base. Its primary mission is to carry all supplies from apples, ammunition and fuel to the ships of the MRB. In her average load, the 542-class LST, provided from LST assets, carries over 250 different items.

Length overall	328 feet	Fuel capacity	274,436 gals.
Beam	50 feet	Fuel load cargo	1,580-tons
Draft	14 feet	Tank deck, sq. ft.	8,400
Engine, diesel	2	Helo landing pad	1
Complement	10 off 147 enl.	Speed	9 knots

LARGE COVERED LIGHTER (YFNB)

CHARACTERISTICS

Length overall	260 feet
Beam	48 feet
Draft	9½ feet

A YFNB is a barge fitted out with boat repair facilities. One YFNB is being used to repair the various boats assigned to River Assault Squadron Nine which is a detached unit of River Assault Flotilla One.

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(Revised 1 Oct 67)

U. S. NAVY "SEAWOLVES"
Light Helicopter Attack Squadron THREE
FACT SHEET

Light Helicopter Attack Squadron THREE (HAL-3), the first armed helicopter squadron ever commissioned in the U.S. Navy, operates in South Vietnam supporting the Navy's Operation Game Warden forces.

Flying heavily-armed UH-1B "Huey" helicopters, the Navy pilots, nicknamed "Seawolves," team up with U.S. Navy river patrol boats (PBRs) in the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone to prevent Viet Cong movement of men and supplies on the inland waterways and canals that lace the area.

In addition to providing support for friendly ground or waterborne units, the Seawolves are also called upon for rocket and machine gun strikes on enemy targets, to rescue downed pilots or others in distress, and to provide fire cover for medical evacuations.

With headquarters at Vung Tau, HAL-3 became operational April 1, 1967. Previously, this support mission had been in the hands of Helicopter Combat Support Squadron ONE detachments, which were absorbed into HAL-3.

HAL-3 consists of some 20 aircraft, broken down into fireteams that operate from Nha Be, Vinh Long, Dong Tam, Binh Thuy and aboard three tank landing ships (LSTs) that operate in the rivers of the Mekong Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone.

The Squadron has a complement of 96 officers - almost all of whom are combat pilots - and 245 enlisted personnel. Two crews of four men each are assigned to each helicopter.

The heavily armed UH-1B helicopter carries fourteen 2.75 inch rockets, four flex-mounted M-60 machine guns, two hand-held M-60 machine guns, plus the individual weapons of the crew.

HAL-3 operates as a unit of the U.S. Naval Force, Vietnam.

(April 1968) -USN-

IV CORP PRESS CENTER

Welcome to the Delta and the IV Corp Press Center. We are here to ensure that you get your story during your visit--all we need is to know what you want.

The Press Center is operated by the IV Corp Information Office. The following information will prove helpful to you during your stay:

CHARGES: There is a $2.00 per evening charge for all correspondents utilizing the Press Center, payable upon departure. MPC or U.S. currency is accepted. If the charge is paid with piasters, 250 piasters will be accepted.

MEALS: There are two dining rooms which may be used by correspondents.

CORDS DINING ROOM--Located in the Press Center Compound, to the right as you leave our building. Cash charges for meals, ala carte style. The Cords dining room in this compound is restricted for use to only those persons having an appropriate dining room pass. However, as a service to news media represenatives it is available to you. All that is required is that you show your MACV Accreditation card when asked. Only a light breakfast on Sunday--all other days the following hours apply:

BREAKFAST	0630 - 0800
LUNCH	1100 - 1300
DINNER	1730 - 1900

EAKIN COMPOUND OFFICERS' MESS--Located about a mile from the Press Center, at Eakin Compound, where IV Corp military adivisory personnel are billeted. Field ration mess (27¢ breakfast, 60¢ lunch, 45¢ dinner) with following meal hours:

BREAKFAST	0615 - 0730
LUNCH	1100 - 1300
DINNER	1730 - 1900

BARS: There are several U.S. bars in the vicinity, the most popular being:

CORDS BAR--located on the Press Center Compound, adjacent to the dining room. All drinks by chits ($5.00 books available). Open from 1800 Monday - Friday, and from Saturday and Sunday at 1200 hours.

EAKIN COMPOUND OFFICERS' CLUB--Drinks sold by chits ($2.00 and $5.00 books available--$5.00 books cover good for two additional drinks). The bar is open from 1730 daily, from 1200 Saturday, and 1000 on Sunday.

SNACK BAR--located at Eakin Compound. Open from 1030 until 2200. Hamburgers, lunch meat sandwiches are available, as well as beer, soft drinks and juices. Only chits are accepted ($2.00 and $5.00 books are available--same as for Officers' Club).

WAKE-UP SERVICE: There is a member of the Public Information Office staff on duty all night whenever the Press Center is occupied. He will accept requests for wake-up calls, as well as be available for any question you may have.

PHONE CALLS--Saigon and other points in Vietnam may be reached by phone from the Press Center. Using extension 2029, dial "7" and ask for the city desired. Extension 2189 may be used only for dialed calls in the Can Tho area.

TELETYPE--The Press Center is linked by teletype with MACOI, Saigon. Copy may be sent over this line and relayed to the Special Projects Division teletype at JUSPAO for pick-up.

TYPEWRITERS--Portable typewriters and paper are available for use in rooms. The larger typewriters in the Press Center are also available, when they are not in use by the staff.

WATER--It is recommended that only bottled water be drunk at the Press Center. All water at the Eakin Compound, including tap, is potable.

CORDS MOVIE--A different movie is shown every evening at 1930 at the CORDS Cinema, located next to the Press Center. Admission is free.

LAUNDRY--Laundry is accepted by the Press Center maid. One-day service is available, providing laundry is received by 0900. A laundry slip may be obtained from the Press Center clerk and charges paid to him upon delivery.

AIR-TRANSPORTATION--In order to provide transportation to various parts of the Delta and to Saigon, it is mandatory that you request arangements through one of the Information Officers or Press Center clerks NO LATER THAN 1000 hours the day preceding desired transportation.

THE LAUNDRY ITEMS ARE AS FOLLOWED:

QTY				
1	Shirt, Fatigue	14	Piasters	
1	Trousers, Fatigue	14	"	"
1	Shirt, Civilian	15	"	"
1	Trousers, Civilian	16	"	"
1	Underwear, T-Shirt	8	"	"
1	Drawers	8	"	"
1	Towel	8	"	"
1	Socks	4	"	"
1	Washcloth	6	"	"
1	Handkerchief	4	"	"

18-0002-001

COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

XFV-2693-F-6-68

A U.S. NAVY RIVER PATROL BOAT (PBR) SPEEDS DOWN THE BASSAC RIVER DURING AN OPERATION GAME WARDEN PATROL. THE 31-FOOT FIBERGLASS CRAFT PATROL THE MANY WATERWAYS OF THE MEKONG DELTA AND THE RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT THE VIET CONG MOVING SUPPLIES BY WATER. THEY ARE ALSO USED TO TRANSPORT THE SEALS AND VIETNAMESE TROOPS.
(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: LT. T.S. STORCK, USN)

CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY MACOI

GOES ABOARD -- A U. S. Navy river patrol boat (PBR) is lifted aboard Mobile Base II at Nha Be. The repair section completely repairs and overhauls the PBRs, as well as repairing damage to the fiberglass hulls of the 31-foot craft.

(OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY LT. T. S. STORCK, USN)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE NUMBER: 108-68
July 9, 1968

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FPO SAN FRANCISCO 96626

18-0002-002

COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

XFV-2738-A-7-68
30KB ABOARD -- A U.S. NAVY RIVER PATROL BOAT (PBR) IS LIFTED ABOARD MOBILE BASE II AT NHA BE. THE REPAIR SECTION COMPLETELY REPAIRS AND OVERHAULS THE PBRS, AS WELL AS REPAIRING DAMAGE TO THE FIBREGLASS HULLS OF THE 31-FOOT CRAFT.
(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY AE. T.S. STORCK, USN)
(CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY MACOV)

REMOVES PUMP -- Engineman Third Class Kenneth Spurr of Houston, Texas, removes one of the water jet units from the stern of a U. S. Navy river patrol boat (PBR) aboard Mobile Base II. The Base contains all the equipment to completely repair and overhaul PBRs.

(OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY LT. T. S. STORCK, USN)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
RELEASE NUMBER: 108-68
July 9, 1968

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18-0002-003

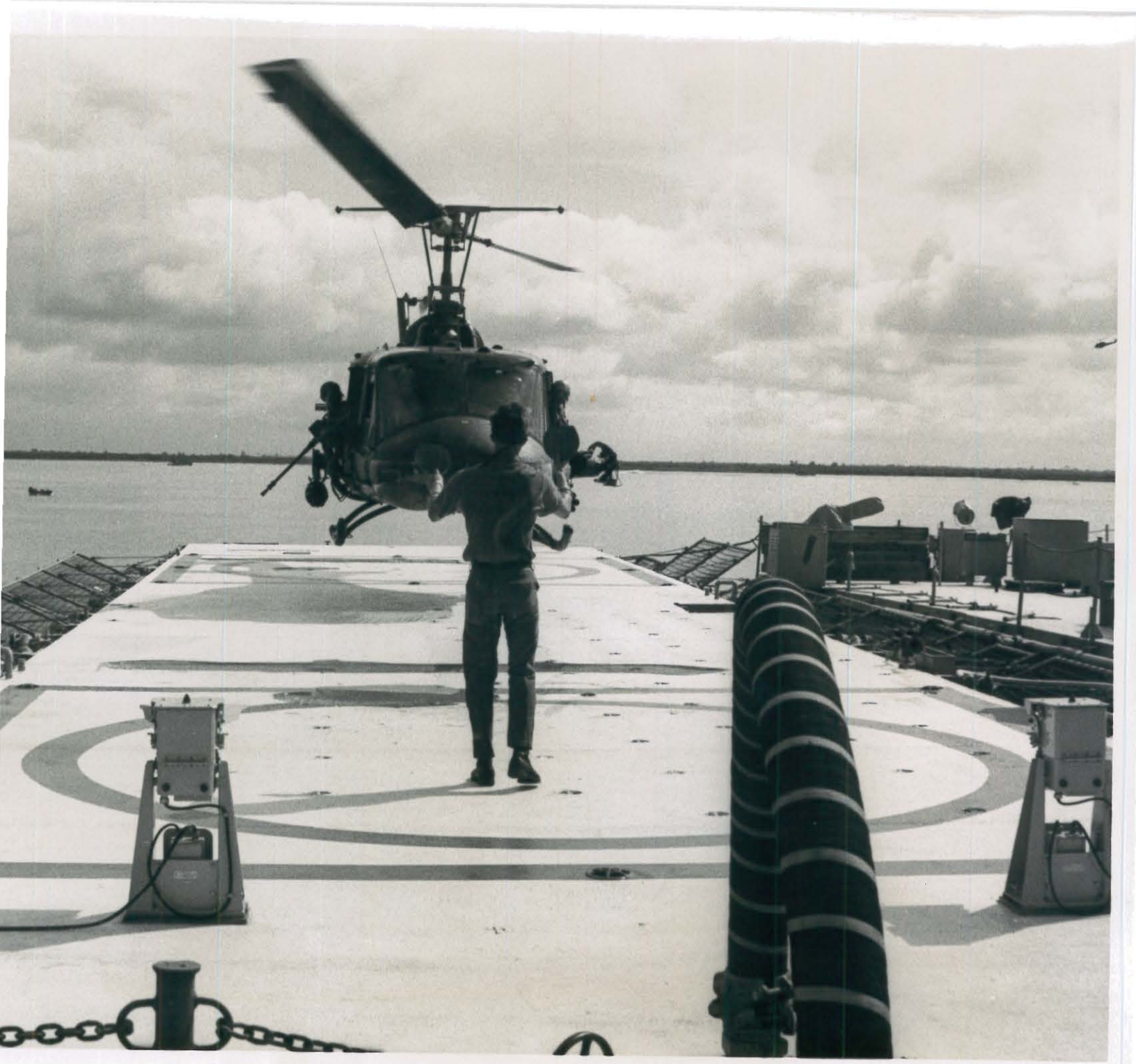
COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

[illegible]-7-68

TRUONG PHUP -- ENGINEMAN THIRD CLASS KENNETH SPUSR OF HOUSTON, TEXAS, REMOVES ONE OF THE WATER JET UNITS FROM THE STERN OF A U.S. NAVY RIVER PATROL BOAT (PBR) ABOARD NORTH BASE II. THE BASE CONTAINS ALL THE EQUIPMENT TO COMPLETELY REPAIR AND OVERHAUL PBRS.

(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY LT. T.S. STORCK, USN)

(CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY MACUI)



COMES IN -- A UH-1B Navy helicopter comes in for a landing on Mobile Base II anchored in the Long Tau River at Nha Be, eight miles southeast of Saigon. Mobile Base II serves as a base for helicopters and river patrol boats.

(OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY LT. T. S. STORCK, USN)

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July 9, 1968

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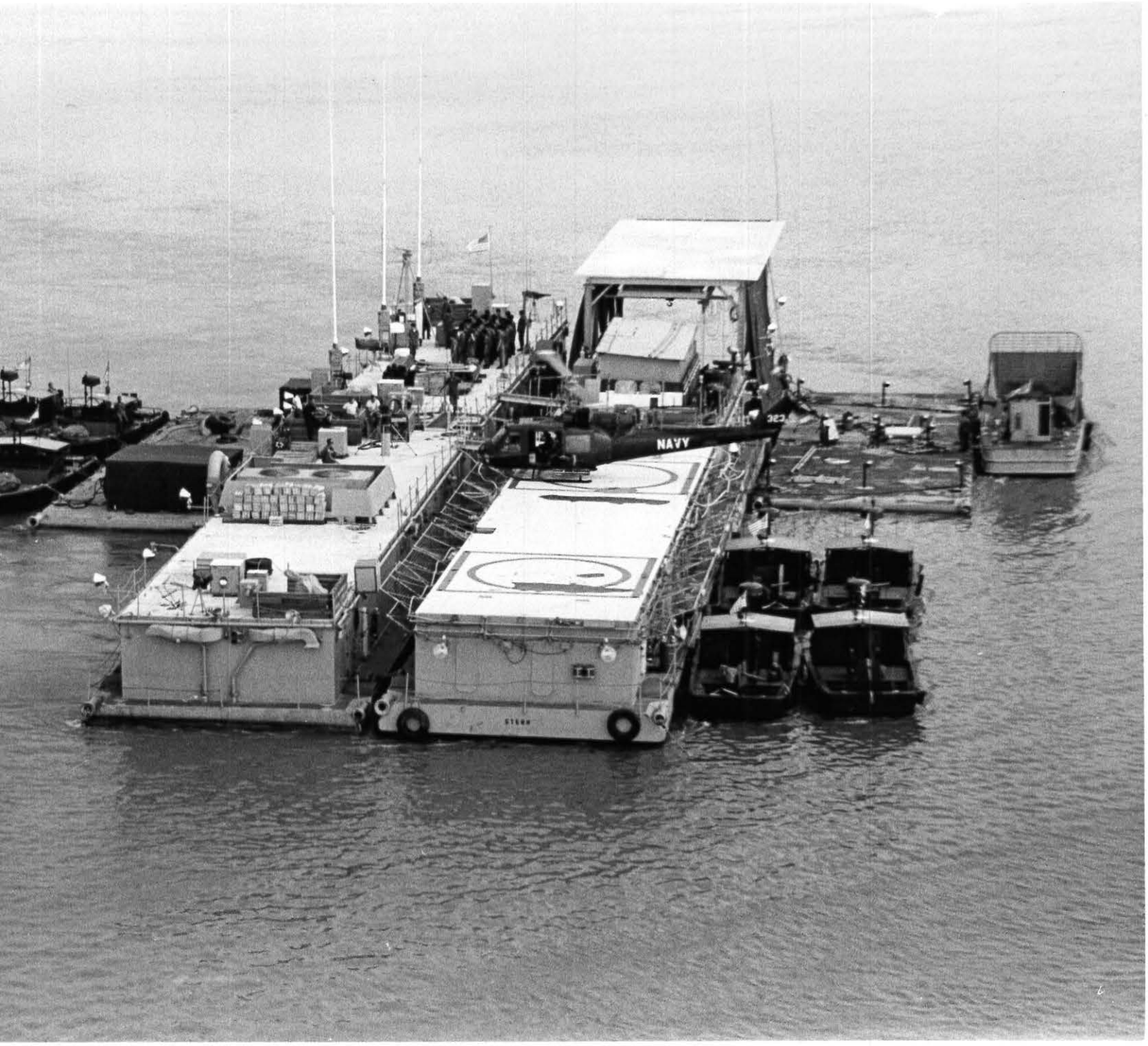
18-0002-004

COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

NFI-2715-6-7-68
COMES IN---A UH-1B NAVY HELICOPTER COMES IN FOR A LANDING ON MOBILE BASE II ANCHORED IN THE LONG TAU RIVER AT NHA BE, EIGHT MILES SOUTHEAST OF SAIGON. MOBILE BASE II SERVES AS A BASE FOR HELICOPTERS AND RIVER PATROL BOATS.
(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY LT. T.S. STORK, USN)
(CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY MACOV)



ANCHORED -- The six units of Mobile Base II lie at anchor in the Long Tau River at Nha Be, Vietnam. The four units with superstructure measure 110 by 30 feet, while the two barge-like units on each side are 90 by 28 feet.

(OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY LT. T. S. STORCK, USN)

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18-0002-003

COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

XFY-2716-E-7-68

ANCHORED -- THE SIX UNITS OF MOBILE BASE II LIE AT ANCHOR IN THE LONG TAU RIVER AT NHA BE, VIETNAM. THE FOUR UNITS WITH SUPERSTRUCTURE MEASURE 120 BY 30 FEET, WHILE THE TWO BARGE-LIKE UNITS ON EACH SIDE ARE 50 BY 28 FEET.
(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH VIA LT. U.S. STORCK)
(CLEARED FOR RELEASE BY MACOI)

18-0002.006

COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

XFV-1604-A-8-67 6-67

ARMORED TROOP CARRIERS (ATCs) OF THE U.S. NAVY'S RIVER ASSAULT FLOTILLA ONE (TF-117) LAND TROOPS OF THE U.S. ARMY'S 9th INFANTRY DIVISION FOR SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS CONDUCTED IN THE MEKONG DELTA BY THE JOINT U.S. ARMY-NAVY MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE.

(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY PH2 CHARLES HALL, USN)

C-92-1

18-0002-007

COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

XFV-1302-D-6-67 6-10-67

CLOSES - THE COMMAND COMMUNICATIONS BOAT (CCB), FROM WHICH THE OPERATION IS CONTROLLED, CLOSES ON TWO JUNKS TO CHECK FOR POSSIBLE ENEMY TROOPS MOVING IN OR OUT OF THE LANDING AREA. AFTER OFF LOADING TROOPS, IT IS THE TASK OF THE RIVER ASSUALT CRAFT TO BLOCKADE THE WATERWAYS TO PREVENT THE ENEMY'S WATERBORNE MOVEMENT,
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY PH1 L.R. ROBINSON,USN

C-91-1
C-91-1

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18-0002-010

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH
COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

XFV-1774-D-9-67 8-67

FLOATING MEDICAL STATION -- A U.S. Army "dustoff" helicopter sets down on the landing pad of a converted Navy armored troop carrier (ATC) to take on a patient during operations conducted by the joint U.S. Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force in South Vietnam's Mekong Delta.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: J. FRENCH, JO1, USN

M-92-2

18-0002.01

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH
COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

XFV-1289-A-6-67 6-10-67

FIRE MISSION - THE MONITOR, "BATTLESHIP OF THE U.S. NAVY'S RIVER ASSAULT FORCE", FIRES 40mm SHELLS INTO AN ENEMY POSITION DURING OPERATIONS IN THE MEKONG DELTA.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: L.R. ROBINSON, PH1, USN

M-91-3

18.0002.012

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH
COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

XFV-1603-F-8-67 7-29-67

A Monitor of River Assault Flotilla One (TF-117) "props" the beach as the Navy river assault craft prepare to land embarked units of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division for search and destroy operations conducted in the Mekong Delta (28 July- 1 Aug. 1967) by the joint U.S. Navy-Army Mobile Riverine Force.
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: T.L. LAWSON, PH2, USN

COMMANDER NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

18 0000 003

ARMED TROOP CARRIERS (ATC) steam along one of the many canals in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam. The ATCs carry U.S. Navy personnel and Vietnamese Marines during efforts by River Assault Flotilla One to find and destroy Viet Cong elements in the Delta and Rung Sat Special Zone of South Vietnam. (OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH)

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T-112-3

18-0002-014

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH
COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

XFV-1200-5-67 5-1-67

RIVER LANDING SHIP - Carrying troops to the objective is the mission of the armored troop carrier (ATC) used by the Nav 's new River Assault Flotilla One in the Mekong Delta. The boat is a converted landing craft especially outfitted for use on the river's of Vietnam. Included in the ATC's armarment is a 20mm cannon, two .50 caliber and four .30 caliber machine guns. The crew of seven also carry individual weapons. Fifty six feet in length, the craft is powered by two disel engines. (OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: G.D. OLSON, PH1, USN)

18-0002-45

COMMANDER U. S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
OFFICIAL U. S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

XFV-1911-A-10-67 10-67

BARRACKS, COMMAND POST, FLAGSHIP - USS BENEWAH (APB-36) a self propelled auxiliary barracks ship, lies in the Soi Rap River of the Rung Sat Special Zone with her assault boats alongside. BENEWAH is the Flagship for Commander River Assault Flotilla One and command ship for an Army Brigade. The units make up the Joint Army/Navy Mobile Riverine Force now operating in the Rung Sat Special Zone, a 400 square mile mangrove swamp south of Saigon, and the Mekong Delta.

(OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: PH2 C.B. HALL USN)

18-0002-06

COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

XFV-2493-E-4-68 4-68

A U.S. NAVY UH-1B HELICOPTER FLIES LOW OVER THE MEKONG DELTA OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THE SEAWOLVES, AS THE MEN CALL THEMSELVES, FLY IN SUPPORT OF U.S. NAVY RIVER PATROL BOATS IN THE MEKONG DELTA AND RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH BY: LT. T. S. STORCK, USN

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